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# THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER.

## ANGLO-ARAB FURNITURE.



rules of severely defined art periods, the decorators are apparently unconscious of the idea that human life is a delightfully incongruous and unruly fact, and that it laughs at precedents,

DECORATORS and designers of art furniture are nowadays teaching people to demand that their furnishings should be absolutely correct reproductions of the standard styles of the past. A Renaissance dining room must be distinctively pure Renaissance, and a Louis Seize drawing-room must have nothing therein but what are absolutely true features of the Louis Seize style. While we are thus taught to live consistent with the

geneous surroundings, and the recognition of the absolutely individual and personal difference of every age in human life, in small things as in great, is the basis of everything essentially interesting, or inspiring.

As we have said the great point is to become filled with the spirit of the old styles that we seek to reproduce, and thus inspired, adapt the style to the actual needs of the present hour. By way of illustrating how such an adaptation can be carried out, we present our readers with a sketch of Arab furniture, such as is eminently suitable for the use of the Arabs themselves, and also with several modern creations in the Arab style, in harmony with the life and interests of modern times.

Our first illustration (Fig. 1.) presents a very good idea of Arabian furnishings in the few specimens here presented. On the left of the engraving will be observed an Arabian corner, or wall cupboard, in dark brown wood, inlaid with pearl. On an inlaid Damascus coffee table is a bronze coffee pot in repousse work. The Mosque lamp is of brass, pierced and hammered in delicate Arabian designs. The brass incense burner is chased in various

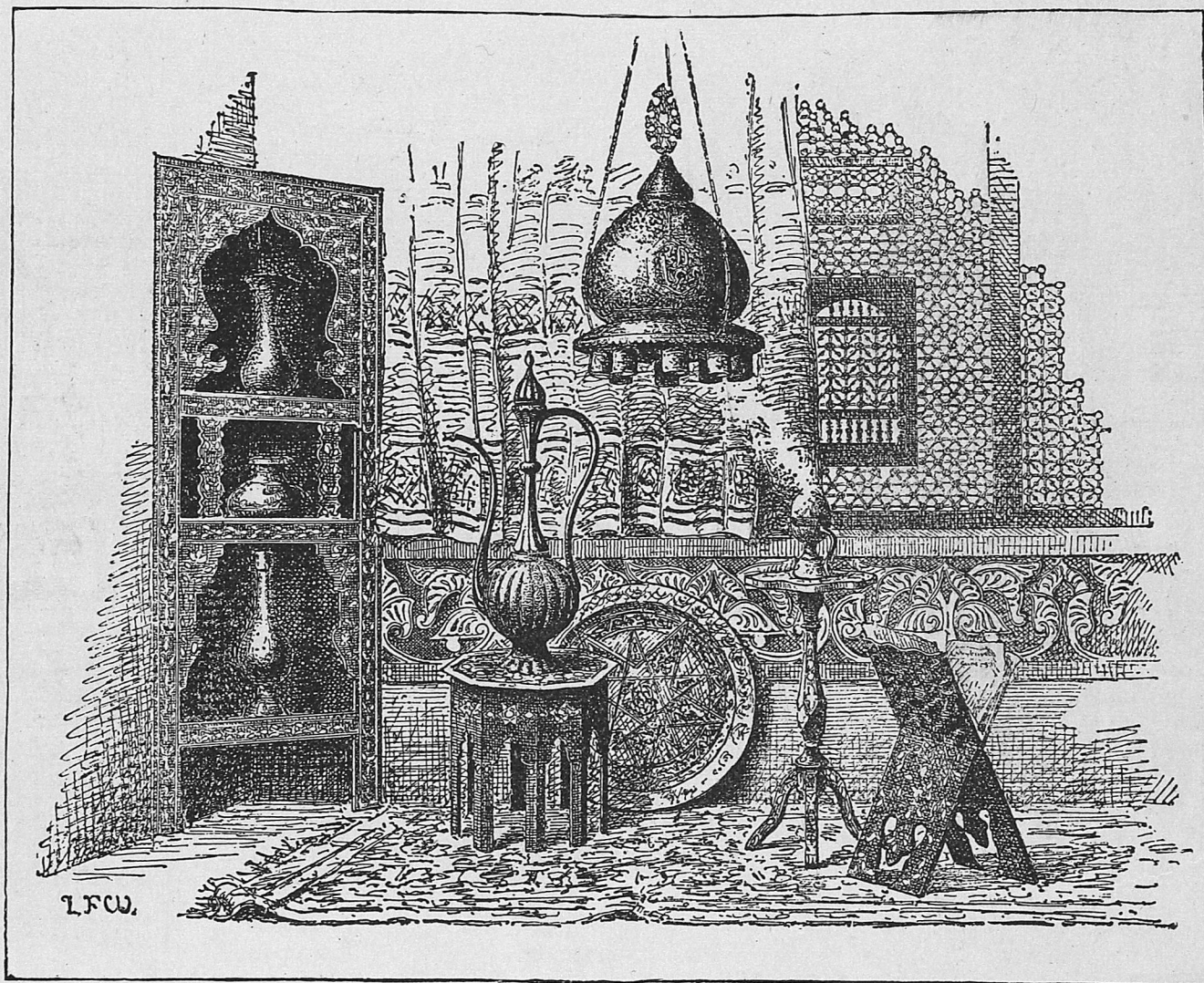


FIG. 1.—ARABIAN FURNISHINGS.

deportment and pedantry, and that its great charm consists in its continually varied self-adaptation to infinite circumstances and chance.

Art revivals are grand things for the decorators, and when a man of genius seeks inspiration in the purest style of given art, and becomes filled with its spirit, he becomes, not an imitator, which is weakness, but he meets the wants of his own day with its spirit, and satisfies them with dignity and freshness, which is true individuality in art.

The present age does not require for its environment the furnishings created by people who lived ages ago, removed both by time and distance from the rapid march of western life. The age, like the individual, is sometimes unique. It possesses something different from what has been, or ever will be heard of again in the world's history, and its impression on its visible surroundings is quite a different thing to the impressions of other times and other ages. We must create our own homo-

designs, and there is a Persian dish in repoussé work. The folding rack for music is pierced and ornamented with Syrian pearl inlay. The wall has a dado border in Moorish relief work, while the screens are in Mushrebiyeh turnings and panelings. There is also a rich tapestry in horizontal stripes, ornamented with Persian arabesques.

By a study of the appropriate, rich and splendid work afforded by examples like these we may create a modified style to suit the tastes and requirements of western civilization. To show just how far the Oriental feeling may be allowed to modify our more or less mechanical civilization, we show herewith several examples of modern Anglo-Arab decorative fittings and furniture. Fig. 2 is an Anglo-Arab overmantel known as the "Kharan" overmantel, with shelves for china and a beveled plate glass centre, the structure of which explains itself at a glance.

Fig. 3 is a "Kharan" over door with shelves for china. The panels of the door itself are filled with Mushrebiyeh turnings,



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which add greatly to the Arab feeling of the entire structure.

Fig. 4 is an Anglo-Arab folding screen with Arab Mushrebiyeh lattice work. This delightful work forms an ideal screen. Fig. 5 is a "Kharan" lamp stand with shelves for pottery, in walnut or stained woods. Fig. 6 is an Irak coffee table, also in walnut both articles being decorated with Mushrebiyeh turnings.

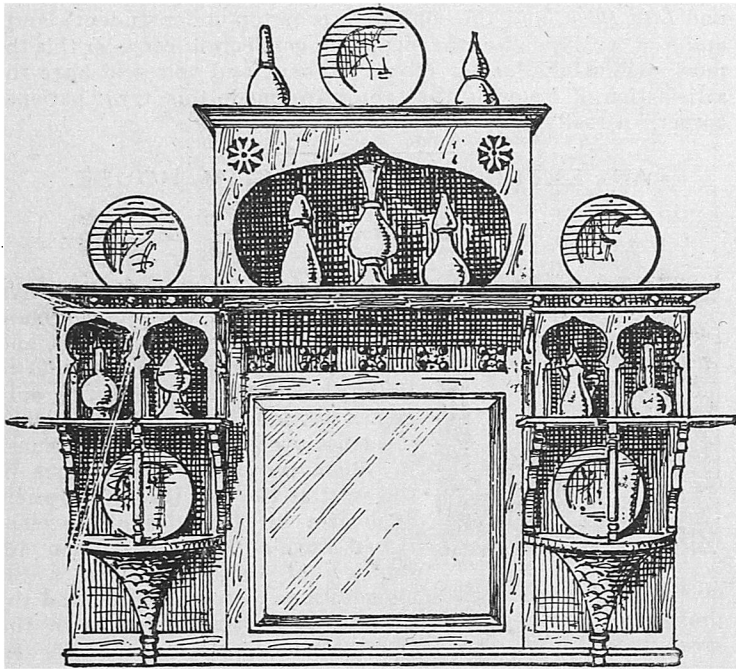


FIG. 2.—A "KHARAN" OVERMANTEL.

Fig. 7 is a "Kharan" writing table. This simple, convenient and most artistic writing table has in all seven drawers with special brass fittings. The top is lined with fine cloth, and it is produced in oak, American walnut and mahogany.

It would be difficult to match the various articles here represented in a style of design so simple, and at the same time so artistic.

THE real reason why the large masses in a picture are better on the left and the opening to the distance better on the right is the tendency of the imagination to move toward the right, in which it only repeats the unbiassed movement of the body. Large masses to the left block up the picture there, and an opening to the right is a means of escape offered just where we naturally look for it. If the large masses are placed on the right the imagination strides against them in its first attempt to escape, and has to recover before it can start afresh in a different direction.

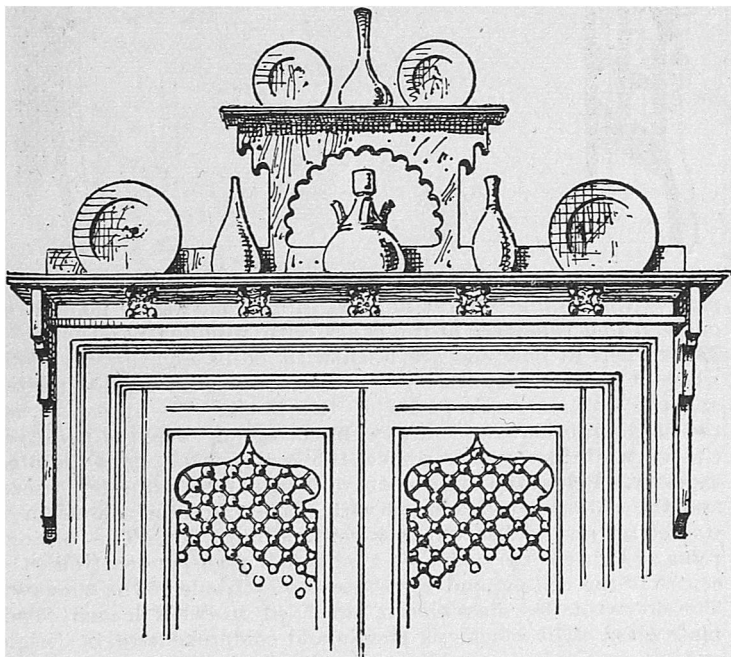


FIG. 3.—A "KHARAN" OVER-DOOR.

## A HARD PROBLEM TO SOLVE.

BY VIRGINIA SHORTTRIDGE.

IN a crowded city like New York, where even breathing room is expensive, people who are not blessed with purses like those of Fortunatus, but who prefer to living in their own houses to hotels and flats, are often met with overwhelming difficulties, when they attempt to make a tall step ladder of a house, artistic and pleasing to the eyes of their friends. Many are only too delighted to find a house, in a good location, which for its breadth, or rather its narrowness, boasts of but twelve feet and a half from outside wall to outside wall. These houses can be made very pretty and comfortable upstairs, with the drawing-room in the second story front, but they present at the very threshold a difficulty I shall try to obviate. Namely, a room which is not more than six feet wide, and whose length is at least fourteen feet; looking for all the world, half forgotten,

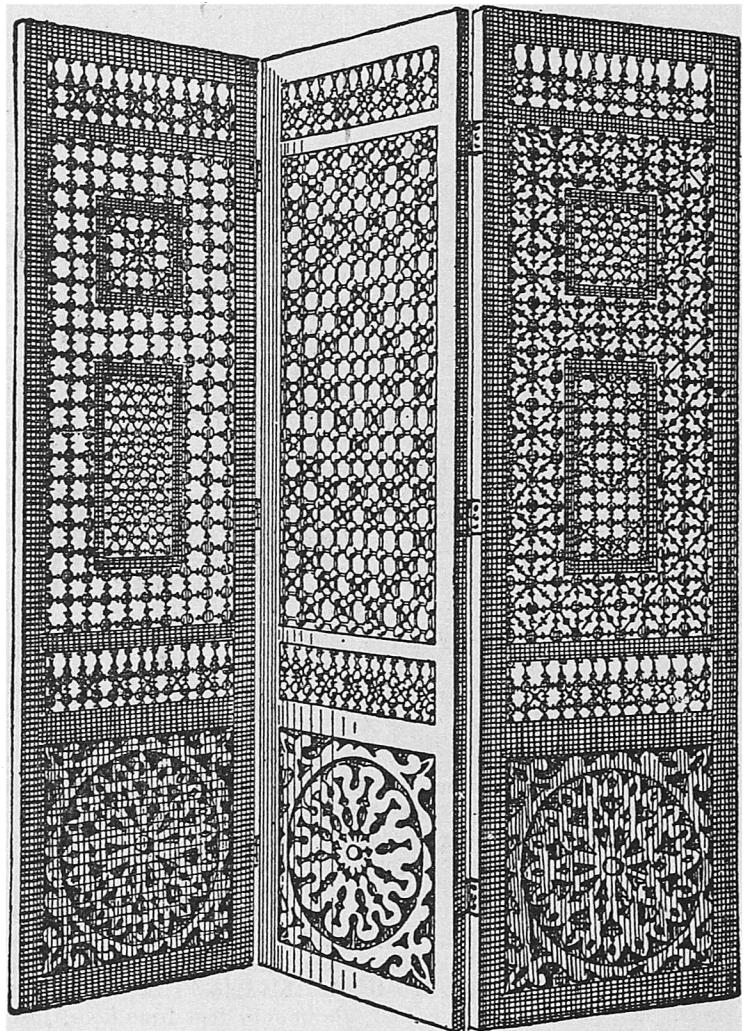


FIG. 4.—ANGLO-ARAB FOLDING SCREEN.

and cut out of the main hallway, by the builder, after the house was entirely built. Now of course, small furniture, daintily finished, a tiny tea table with wee spindle-leg chairs, a tete-a-tete sofa, and in fact, the most expensive furniture imported, would make this room very elegant, but then there would be little difficulty, as the decorator hired to "do the house," would take charge of the whole affair. But the real difficulty presents itself to those who have nothing but the solid old fashioned furniture, which has in reality the look of appealing to the guest, to place it in a twenty-two foot house instead of subjecting it to the indignity of curling up its feet under a table, or of rolling its finely carved back under some projecting mantel shelf, in order to make a space in the centre of a room, of about six inches square, where two persons standing up would look uncomfortably crowded. Another difficulty with such a room is that it seems all doors. A large folding double door, to enter, and a small door at the end which almost runs into the door of dumb-waiter, which, if open, discloses to the guest waiting, all

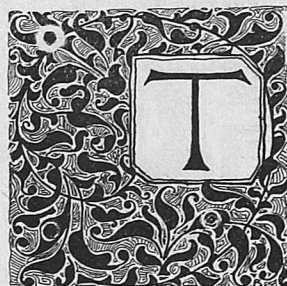


the viands as they are removed from its shelves, by the maid, should he or she happen to call at meal time. Directly opposite this door, is the window, and that window throws its light into the square rear hall and is the principal natural light to guide those who ascend the straiscase, so it stands to reason that if this door is shut, the rear hall is in pitchy darkness. Put a thin dark red woolen material, like figured woolen brocade, with no other color in it, unlined on rod, at this door, and roll half off, then place a three-sided screen, about four feet high, of light cream color Chinese paper, in the room quite close to the curtain, (the door of course has been taken off, or rolled in out of sight) thereby screening the dumb waiter from the eyes of any guest, and the curtain having been pushed half way back, sufficient daylight is thrown into the rear hall. There is no necessity for using

shelves, with some dainty work, in a gay little basket, on one of the tables, and one or two artistic vases, and some books on the mantel shelf, which are reflected in a mirror over mantel, give an artistic effect. If there are gentlemen in the family, place a pretty cigar box on one of the shelves, and an antique Roman lighter, made of brass, which holds alcohol, on the table near lounge, also put daily papers on lower shelf of this table, and *Life*, *Puck*, and the comical ones on top under student's lamp, and you will find that the masculine gender will consider this the most delightful of after dinner corners, and you will have the satisfaction of knowing that you have made this try "patience corner," a really artistic and cosy work.

## AN EXTENSION TO A CITY HOUSE.

BY MANLY N. CUTTER.



THE cities of New York and Brooklyn are remarkable for the compact manner in which houses are erected, and when the owner of a house wishes to build an addition thereto, the only choice left him is to build his supplementary attachment to the house in whatever vacant space exists in the yard at the rear thereof. Owners of houses in the cities above mentioned have of late years taken advantage of this, the only avail-

able space, to erect handsome additions to their houses, and the problem of how best to utilize the yard space (which is, in the great majority of cases, not more than 25 feet square) for an extension to the city house, is the problem that is agitating the minds of architects.

On the opposite page we publish a ground plan, together with decorative charts for an oval dining-room in the Italian Renaissance style. It seems to us to solve the problem referred to in a singularly happy manner. The interior of the apartment is finished in fine architectural style, and in addition to the plans of the floor and ceiling, there are charts exhibiting elevations of the entire circumference of the apartment. The lower

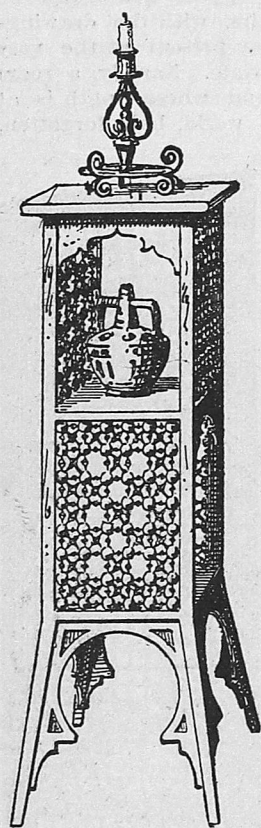


FIG. 5.—A "KHARAN" LAMP STAND.

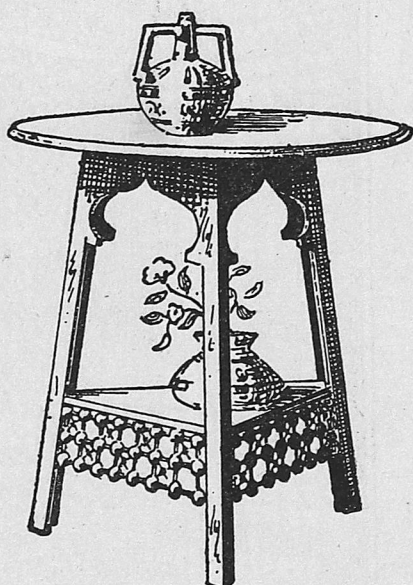


FIG. 6.—AN "IRAK" COFFEE TABLE.

this door as an exit, so an old fashioned sofa may be pushed somewhat "catey corner," across the curtain and screen, that in so doing form a pretty background. There is then two feet of wall from the screen to the back of the room. On one side of wall put thin shallow shelves made of plain pine wood, stained mahogany or walnut, rising about four feet from the floor, and meeting a shelf of same width, which is put lengthwise until it reaches the mantel on same side of the room, under which is an old fashioned table with lamp, and besides this an old straight backed chair. Opposite this is one shelf, about four feet from floor, just high enough to enable one to sit under it comfortably and corresponding to one on opposite side of the room. Place on this unframed etchings, papers, books, etc., (the magazines and newspapers go well on the other shelves). The hanging in folding door, which we meet just here, is a portière, made of Bagdad stripes. On this side of doorway, put a small square table with student's lamp, and at foot of sofa, opposite this a table close up to mantel and old brass claw foot, hardwood chair. To make this room as light as possible, no shade is on the window, but sash curtains of dotted Swiss, tied back with white ribbon, and a bamboo curtain swinging from a piece of dark fret work. If the floor is of hard wood, or stained a color to correspond with the furniture, and rugs are spread, it gives the room a larger appearance, than if it be carpeted with velvet or Brussels carpeting. If the sofa is rather worn and old a softly tinted Oriental rug, thrown over it, with comfortable looking cushions, and an old banjo placed gracefully leaning on them give a pretty effect. An antique iron lantern swinging on a bracket from panelling on one side of doorway, a growing plant or so, rather small, a good hardy fern, or a tiny palm, some wandering Jew, in a glass vase, placed here and there on the

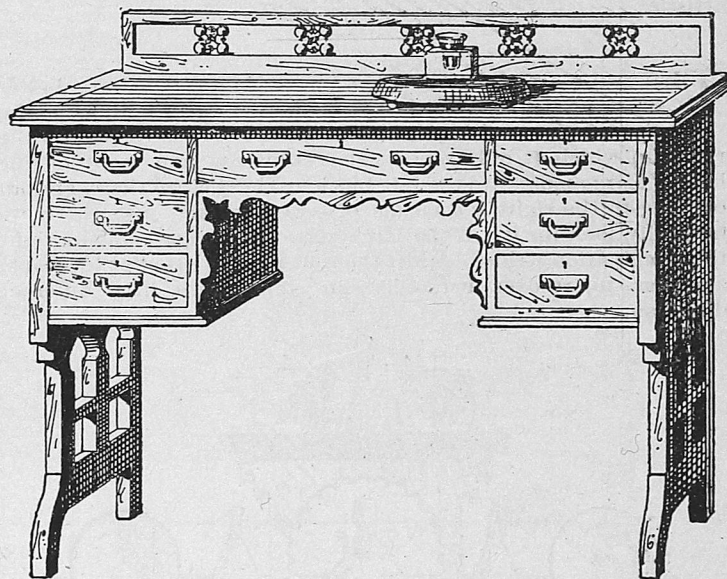


FIG. 7.—A "KHARAN" WRITING TABLE.

part of the dining-room is finished in oak, having a mantel at one end and sideboard at the other, with windows at either side. The corners at one end are filled with china and glass closets, while at the other end are the entrances to the butler's pantry and the hall, or back parlor of the house. The intervals between the pilasters and the wainscoting are filled with silver closets, while the panels above the wainscoting have painted tapestry. Below the cornice there is a painted tapestry frieze, and the ceiling is ornamented with plaster designs colored in a single tint and picked out in a contrasting color. The dining-room is lighted by means of a chandelier suspended from the centre of the ceiling, and by sconces on each side of the windows. The doors of the glass closets are filled in with leaded coach plate glass. The scheme is simple and comprehensive in design, and economic in respect to capacity, and can be practically applied. Suggestive designs for furniture are also given.